

DALE FARM HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Secretary
Grattan Puxon
1 John Harper Street
Colchester CO1 1RP
Dale.farm@btinternet.com

Ms Dawn French
Project Leader: Dale Farm
BDC, Basildon Centre
St Martin's Square
Basildon SS14 1DL

19 July 2010

RISK ASSESSMENT FOR DEMOLITION AT HOVEFIELDS DRIVE

Dear Dawn,

I am writing to request from you under the Freedom of Information Act a copy of the Risk Assessment made before the demolition operation undertaken for BDC by Constant & Co at Hovefields Drive, Wickford, on 29 June 2010.

I spoke to a member of the company while the work was in progress and he assured me that on this occasion such a risk assessment report was drawn up and submitted for approval.

This is a matter of importance for members of the Dale Farm Housing Association who are very concerned about the safety of their children should you use Constant & Co for a similar demolition operation at Dale Farm.

It is quite clear from witnesses and photographs taken on 29 June at Hovefields Drive, and since submitted to the HSE, that while Constant brought to the site a quantity of safety fencing, this was never erected to form a proper perimeter safety fence. Such a fence was clearly need to prevent children, and indeed other members of the public, getting onto the site.

Photographs show that children were not only close to working diggers but were also inside a building shortly before it was demolished. They were also climbing onto a lorry used by Constant. We wish to see from the Risk Assessment whether it was intended to erect safety fencing, and also to check what other safety measures were planned before the operation.

As you will ~~refuse~~ ^{realise} from what I am saying, this is a matter of considerable public concern where the safety and even lives of children are involved. You were requested earlier by the Childrens' Commissioner to provide information on what safety measures would be taken. I would hope therefore that you will not refuse the request for a copy of the Risk Assessment Report, which would compel us to refer the matter on appeal to the Information Commissioner.

Meanwhile, we are ensuring that the UN Commission for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is updated on the latest evictions before the date set (30 July) for an answer from the Government on the UN request that you not proceed with the destruction of the Dale Farm community.

Grattan Puxon
secretary DFHA